

THE PORTENT.

A Story of the Inner Vision of the Highlanders, Commonly Called the Second Sight.

By GEORGE MACDONALD.

CHAPTER VI.—(Continued.)

"What right had you to be there?"
"I heard a cry and could not help going."
"This impossible. I see. Some wretch told you, and you watched for me."
"I did not, Lady Alice."
She burst into tears and fell back on the couch, with her face turned away. Then, anger reviving, she went on through her sobs:
"Why did you not leave me where I fell? You had done enough to hurt me without bringing me here."
And again she fell a-weeping.
Now I found words.
"Lady Alice," I said, "how could I leave you lying in the moonlight? Before the sun rose the terrible moon might have distorted your beautiful face."
"Be silent, sir. What have you to do with my face?"
"And the wind, Lady Alice, was blowing through the corridor windows, keen and cold as the moonlight. How could I leave you?"
"You could have called for help."
"Forgive me, Lady Alice, if I erred in thinking you would rather command the silence of a gentleman to whom an accident had revealed your secret, than to have been exposed to the domestics who would have gathered round us."
Again she half raised herself, and again her eyes flashed.
"A secret with you, sir?"
"But, besides, Lady Alice," I cried, springing to my feet in distress at her hardness, "I heard the horse with the clanking shoe, and in terror, I caught you up, and fled with you, almost before I knew what I did. And I hear it now—hear it now," I cried, as once more the ominous sound rang through my brain.

The angry glow faded from her face, and its paleness grew almost ghastly with dismay.
"Do you hear it?" she said, throwing back her covering, and rising from the couch. "I do not."
She stood listening with distended eyes, as if they were the gates by which such sounds entered.
"I did not hear it," she said again, after a pause. "It must be gone now." Then, turning to me, she laid her hand on my arm, and looked at me. Her black hair, disordered and entangled, wandered all over her white dress to her knees. Her face was paler than ever; and her eyes were so wide open that I could see the white all around the dark iris.
"Did you hear it?" she said. "No one ever heard it before but me. I must forgive you—you could not help it. I will trust you, too. Take me to my room."
Without a word of reply I wrapped my plaid about her. Then, bethinking me of my chamber candle, I lighted it, and opening the two doors, led her out of the room.

"How is this?" she asked. "Why do you take me this way? I do not know the place."
"This is the way I brought you in, Lady Alice," I answered. "I know no other way to the spot where I found you. And I can guide you no further than there—hardly even so far, for I groped my way there for the first time this night or morning—whichever it may be."
"It is past midnight, but not morning yet," she replied. "I always know. But there must be another way from your room."
"Yes, of course, but we would have to pass the housekeeper's door—she is always late."
"Are we near her room? I should know my way from there. I fear it would not surprise any of the household to see me. They would say—'It is only Lady Alice.' Yet I can not tell you how I shrink from being seen. No—I will try the way you brought me—if you do not mind going back with me."
This conversation passed in low tone and hurried words. It was scarcely over before we found ourselves at the foot of the staircase. Lady Alice shivered, and drew the plaid close round her. We ascended, and soon found the corridor; but when we got through it, she was rather bewildered. At length, after looking into several of the rooms, empty all, except for stray articles of furniture, she exclaimed, as she entered one, and, taking the candle from my hand, held it above her head:
"Ah, yes! I am right at last. This is the haunted room. I know my way now."
I caught a darkling glimpse of a large room, apparently quite furnished; how, except from the general feeling of antiquity and mustiness, I could not tell.

At the door of this room she said: "I must leave you here. I will put down the light a little further on, and you can come for it. I owe you many thanks. You will not be afraid of being left so near the haunted room?"
I assured her that at present I felt strong enough to meet all the ghosts in or out of Hades. Turning, she smiled a sad, sweet smile, and then went on a few paces, and disappeared. The light, however, remained; and I found the candle, with my plaid, deposited at the foot of a short flight of steps, at right angles to the passage she left me in.

CHAPTER VII.

LOVE AND POWER.

"When the morning came I began to doubt whether my wakefulness had not been part of my dream, and I had not dreamed the whole of my supposed adventures. There was no sign of a lady's presence left in the room. How could there have been? But throwing the plaid which covered me aside, my head was caught by a single thread of something so fine that I could not see it till the light grew strong. I wound it round and round my finger and doubted no longer.
At breakfast there was no Lady Alice—nor at dinner. I grew uneasy.

but what could I do? I soon learned that she was ill; and a weary fortnight passed before I saw her again. Mrs. Wilson told me that she had caught cold, and was confined to her room. So I was ill at ease, not from love alone, but from anxiety as well.

I continued my work in the library, although it did not advance with the same steadiness as before. One day, in listless mood, I took up a volume, without knowing what it was, or what I sought. It opened at the "Amorette" of Edmund Spenser. I was on the point of closing it again, when a line caught my eye. I read the sonnet; read another; found I could understand them perfectly; and that hour the poetry of the sixteenth century, hitherto a sealed fountain, became an open well of refreshment, and the strength that comes from sympathy.

That same day, I remember well, Mrs. Wilson told me that Lady Alice was much better. But as days passed, and still she did not make her appearance, my anxiety only changed its object, and I feared that it was from aversion to me that she did not join the family. But her name was never mentioned in my hearing by any of the other members of it; and her absence appeared to be to them a matter of no moment or interest.

One night, as I sat in my room, I found, as usual, that it was impossible to read; and throwing the book aside, relapsed into that sphere of thought which now filled my soul, and had for its center the Lady Alice. I recalled her form as she lay on the couch, and brooded over the remembrance till a longing to see her, almost unbearable, arose within me.

"Would to heaven," I said to myself, "that will were power!"
In this occurrence of idleness, distraction and vehement desire, I found all at once, without any foregone conclusion, that I was concentrating and intensifying within me, until it rose almost to a command, the operative volition that Lady Alice should come to me. In a moment more I trembled at the sense of a new power which sprang into conscious being within me. I had no prevision of its existence, when I gave way to such extravagant and apparently helpless wishes. I now actually awaited the fulfillment of my desire; but in a condition ill-fitted to receive it, for the eSart had already exhausted me to such a degree that every nerve was in a conscious tremor. Nor had I long to wait.

I heard no sound of approach; the closet-door folded back, and in glided, open-eyed, but sightless, pale and saint-like, the Lady Alice. I started from head to foot at what I had done. She was more terrible to me in that moment than any pale-eyed ghost could have been. For had I not exercised a kind of necromantic art, and roused without awaking the slumbering dead? She passed me, walking round the table at which I was seated, went to the couch, laid herself down with a maidenly care, turned a little to one side, with her face toward me and gradually closed her eyes. In something deeper than sleep she lay, and yet not in death. I rose, and once more knelt beside her, but dored not touch her. In what far realms of life might the lovely soul be straying! What mysterious modes of being might now be the lonely surroundings of her second life! Thoughts unutterable rose in me, culminated and sunk like the stars of heaven, as an absent life—a life that I loved by means of the symbol; a symbol that I loved because of the life. How long she lay thus, how long I gazed upon her thus, I do not know.

I knew that she was awake, some moments before she opened her eyes. When at last those depths of darkness disclosed themselves, slowly uplifting their white cloudy portals, the same consternation she had formerly manifested, accompanied by yet greater anger, followed.
"Yet again! Am I your slave because I am weak?" she rose in the majesty of wrath and moved toward the door.
"Lady Alice, I have not touched you. I am to blame but not as you think. Could I help longing to see you? And if the longing passed, ere I was aware, into a will that you should come, and you obeyed it, forgive me."
I hid my face in my hands, overcome by conflicting emotions. A kind of stupor came over me. When I lifted my head she was standing by the closet door.

"I have waited," she said, "to make a request of you."
"Do not utter it, Lady Alice. I know what it is. I give you my word—my solemn promise, if you like—that I will never do it again." She thanked me with a smile, and vanished.
Much to my surprise she appeared at dinner next day. No notice was taken of her, except by the younger of my pupils, who called out:
"Hallo, Alice! Are you down?"
She smiled and nodded, but did not speak. Everything went on as usual. There was no change in her behavior, except in one point. I ventured the experiment of paying her some ordinary amount of attention. She thanked me without a trace of the scornful expression I all but expected to see upon her beautiful face. But when I addressed her about the weather, or something equally interesting, she made no reply; and Lady Hilton gave me a stare, as much as to say, "Don't you know it is of no use to talk to her?"
Alice saw the look, and, coloring to the eyes, rose, and left the room. When she had gone Lady Hilton said to me:
"Don't speak to her, Mr. Campbell, it distresses her. She is very peculiar, you know."

CHAPTER VIII.

A NEW PUPIL.

One day, exactly three weeks after her last visit to my room, as I was sitting with my three pupils in the school room, Lady Alice entered, and began to look on the book shelves as if she wanted some volume. After a few moments, she turned, and in approaching the table, said to me, in an abrupt, yet hesitating manner:
"Mr. Campbell, I cannot spell. How am I to learn?"
I thought for a moment, and replied: "Copy a passage every day, Lady Alice, from some favorite book. Then if you will allow me I shall be most happy to point out any mistakes you may have made."
"Thank you, Mr. Campbell, I will; but I am afraid you will despise me, when you find how badly I spell."
"There is no fear of that," I rejoined.

"It is a mere peculiarity. So long as one can think well, spelling is altogether secondary."
"Thank you, I will try," she said, and left the room.

Next day she brought me an old ballad, written tolerably, but in a school girl's hand. She had copied the antique spelling letter for letter.
"This is quite correct," I said; "but to copy such as this will not teach you properly; for it is very old, and consequently old-fashioned."
"Is it old? Don't we spell like that now? You see I do not know anything about it. You must set me a task then."
"This I undertook with more pleasure than I dared to show. Every day she brought me the appointed exercise, written with a steadily improving hand. To my surprise I never found a single error in the spelling. Of course, when advancing in the process, I made her write from my dictation, she did make blunders, but not so many as I had expected; and she seldom repeated one after correction.

Long before Lady Alice had made this progress, my nightly struggles began to diminish in violence. They had now entirely ceased. The temptation had left me. I felt certain that for week she had never walked in her slippers beyond my power, and was glad of it.
I was, of course, most careful of my behavior during all this period, and strove to pay Lady Alice no more attention than I paid to the rest of my pupils; and I cannot help thinking that I succeeded. But now and then in the midst of some instruction I was giving Lady Alice, I caught the eye of Lady Lucy, a sharp, common-minded girl, fixed upon one or the other of us, with an inquisitive vulgar expression, which I did not like. This made me more careful still.

Whether it was from Lady Lucy's evil report, or that the change in Lady Alice's habits and appearance had attracted the attention of Lady Hilton, I cannot tell; but one morning she appeared at the door of my study, and called her. Lady Alice rose and went, with a slight gesture of impatience. In a few minutes she returned, looking angry and determined, and resumed her seat. But whatever it was that had passed between them, it had destroyed that quiet flow of feelings which was necessary to the working of her thoughts. In vain she tried; she could do nothing correctly. At last she burst into tears and left the room. I was almost beside myself with distress and apprehension. She did not return that day.

Next morning she entered at the usual hour, looking composed, but paler than of late, and showing signs of recent weeping. When we were all seated, and had just commenced our work, I happened to look up, and caught her eyes intently fixed on me. They dropped instantly, but without any appearance of confusion. She went on with her arithmetic, and succeeded tolerably. But this respite was to be of short duration. Lady Hilton again entered and called her. She rose angrily, and my quick ear caught the half-uttered words, "That woman will make an idiot of me again!" She did not return, and never from that hour resumed her place in the school-room.

I was lying on the floor of my room one midnight, with my face to the ground, when suddenly I heard a low, sweet, strange voice singing somewhere. The moment I became aware that I heard it, I felt as if I had been listening to it unconsciously for some minutes past. I lay still, either charmed to stillness, or fearful of breaking the spell. As I lay, I was lapped in sighs, and the waves fell with a threatening tone upon the beach, muttering many maledictions as they rushed up, and whispering cruel portents as they drew back, hissing and gurgling, through the million narrow ways of the pebbly ramparts; and I knew that a maiden in white was standing in the cold wind, by the angry sea singing. I had a kind of dreamy belief in my dream; but, overpowered by the spell of the music, I still lay and listened. Keener and stronger, under the impulses of my will, grew the power of my hearing. At last I could distinguish the words. The ballad was "Annie of Lochroyan," and Lady Alice was singing it.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

SHE WAS A HEROINE.

A Tale of the Death of Lincoln in Which a Lewiston Lady Figured.

"There," said a Lewiston official, "is a woman passing up Pine street, who I personally know is a heroine. I was in the city of Sherbrook, province of Quebec, Canada, the day that Abraham Lincoln was shot and this woman was the wife of a dealer in ship timbers." quotes the Lewiston Journal. "They lived in Gordon street in that city and on the top of their house was a flag-staff. When she heard that Lincoln was dead her husband being away, she put up the United States flag at half-mast. After breakfast a soldier came up the street and seeing the flag, went up to the door and requested it taken down. She explained why it was up and refused politely but decidedly to take it down. He smiled warning and went away, saying: 'Well, I have done my duty.' 'A short time after a lieutenant with six soldiers came up the street and opening the gate, entered the yard. 'What do you want?' inquired the woman.

"I want you to take down that flag," responded the officer.
"Again she explained that Lincoln was dead and she was an American."
"I can't help that. I have orders to take down that flag and I shall do it," the officer responded.
"He started to go around the house to enter it, when he was encountered by a man named Charles Goodrich from Clinton, Me., who said: 'If you take another step toward that flag I'll dye the ground here the color of your coats.' The officer stepped back to the line and ordered his men to advance. But they stood still. Seeing his advantage Charles Goodrich ordered them out of the yard and they went. The next day when the horrible murder of Lincoln was more fully realized the mayor sent an apology to the lady and at the indignation meeting which was shortly held, she was applauded for her action. She lives in Lewiston now and one of her daughters married a Lisbon street merchant."

GRAND OLD PARTY.

MORE SERIOUS TROUBLES FOR THE TREASURY.

Grave Dangers That Would Follow the Passage of the Currency Bill—The Future of the Republican Party—Free Trade Democrats.

Threatens Bankruptcy.
The New York Tribune urges the pressing necessity of preventing the passage of the new currency bill and points out the dangerous evils that would result if it became a law:

It is sheer nonsense to argue that this bill ought to be put through because the treasury is in trouble. The fact is that the treasury is in trouble because this dangerous bill is pending. Its passage would not in the slightest respect remove the dangers of the treasury, but would in all probability increase them greatly. This is obvious when it is considered that the new bill, while it does not formally require national banks to change their basis of circulation, does expose them to such unfair and destructive competition by state banks that they would be most powerfully influenced to abandon the national system, sell their bonds and organize under the new bill as state banks. This would leave them free to continue the circulation of notes of less than \$10 each, while as national banks this most profitable part of their circulation would be withdrawn. The change would save them from two taxes amounting to 1 percent on their entire circulation, which state banks would not have to pay. It would offer the chance by convenient arrangements with state officials to get back into their own keeping as state deposits at least a part of the guarantee fund of 30 percent of their circulation which the state banks are permitted to place with a state official, who can then keep the fund as he does other funds wherever he thinks safest and best, while the national banks have to place their funds with the treasury.

These are but part of the inducements which would operate to break down the national system, and to substitute notes of forty-four different kinds of state banks. One of enormous potency is the opportunity to lend money on real estate, which in some sections would enable the banks to increase their capital and business almost indefinitely, and, until the crash comes, their profits also. The men engaged in conducting national banks are not so entirely differing from others engaged in money lending that they would shrink from the risks attending loans of this character. What restrictions state laws may provide can only be guessed from experience under state banking laws before the war, when Democratic money brought repeated disasters. Thirty years under the national system have proved that it is eminently wise in its restrictions and safeguards, and the disposition to overthrow these, and to rush again into the saturnalia of wild-cat banking, is not one which any sober business man should encourage.

All the influence which the new bill would exert in driving banks out of the national system, or to subject them to such competition from less restricted and less taxed state banks, would operate also to cause sales of United States bonds which the banks now hold. That some would surrender circulation at once, should the new bill be passed, is only too obvious, and the sale of bonds by these would start a fall in the price. But the losses liable to be incurred by holding the bonds too long would then weigh too powerfully with other banks, and so every sale would tend to bring about other sales. It is not this sort of thing which will restore confidence in the treasury or prevent withdrawals of gold, or render it more easy for the government to maintain gold payments. On the contrary, it is only too clear that the original, would threaten national bankruptcy and a profound monetary disturbance.

Too Well Fed.

President Cleveland's secretary of agriculture is preaching a new gospel, that the people of this country eat too much. That is what the miserly old man thought when he gave each of his children a penny to pay them for going to bed without their supper and made them give it back to him in the morning before he would let them eat their breakfast. Guess the people of America, as a class, have not suffered very much from overloaded stomachs since Secretary Morton was first installed in office. They were not hired to go to bed without their supper, either, and they didn't have their breakfast until the 6th of November.

Gresham's Own.

A gentleman in moderate circumstances, who took up the occupation of running for the presidency about ten years ago, and who is now estimated to be worth \$5,000,000, with more than two years of a good job yet before him, has little reason to doubt that this is a country in which any man can make a living if he is only willing to work for it. This is probably the reason why Grover Cleveland cannot get into his head the real distinction between a "pensioner" and a "pauper."—St. Louis Star-Sayings.

Looks Best at a Distance.

When Tillman succeeds Butler there will be a great loss of beauty to the United States senate. Tillman is a self-made man of the impressionist school.

a scheme that will unbalance the existing safety and equality of the circulating medium and develop speculation in bank notes into a flourishing industry.

A Free Trade Proclamation.

The executive committee of the Democratic party of Minnesota have come out boldly and squarely for free trade. In their address they plant themselves without reserve or qualification upon the most radical extreme of the free trade doctrines—upon the naked principle of a tariff for revenue only, with all its consequences, including "a direct tax levied as provided in the constitution sufficient to compensate for the tax removed." This position certainly has the merit of boldness, as the argument for it has the merit of logical consistency if not of practical plausibility. The theory of it is that the disastrous defeat which has been suffered by the Democratic party is due to the practical repudiation by its representatives in congress of the principles of free trade declared in the national platform of 1892. They have been monkeying with the false gods of protection, and the party which was exalted to the control of the government in that year on the pledge that it would extirpate every vestige of the protective policy, and turn the country over to the British policy, and its commerce and manufactures to the unrestricted reign of British competition, was swept away in a tempest of popular wrath because it did not keep these pledges. The only thing now left for it is to go back to first principles, appeal to the conscience of the nation, and educate the American people in the blessings of free trade until they are sufficiently enlightened to call upon the Democratic party to deliver them from the bondage and burdens of the Protection Hoodoo. We are afraid that the beaten and demoralized cohorts of the Democratic party have strayed away too far from the standard which it flung to the breeze in 1892 to be recalled to their allegiance by the toot of Mr. Smalley's horn. They are the lost tribes of the house of Israel. But there is something quite touching in the patient faith of this indomitable remnant of the chosen people—under all the calamities which have befallen and still brood over them like a pall—in the coming of the Messiah that is to set them free.—St. Paul Pioneer Press.

What the Republicans Will Do.

Some of the late exotic allies of the late Democratic party have been chipping out questions as to what the Republican party intended to do, and have been issuing shrill demands that we should define our policy. Let me repeat what I said on this point during the campaign. We have got control of the house of representatives, and that is all we have got for the next two years. The senate will be evenly divided; the president will be Democratic. We shall prevent any more assaults on our industries, any more juggling with our finances, any more crazy legislation by the Democratic party during that period. So far as in us lies we shall keep things steady and try to give business a chance. That is all we can do and that is all that we propose to undertake. There are some people who either now or later will invite us to present sample tariff or sample currency bills. In such nonsense as that I hope and believe the Republican party will not indulge. We are not going to be the responsible party in power before the 4th of March, 1897.

It would be unwise and wrong in my own opinion to occupy our time in the next congress by presenting sample bills on this subject or on that, or by passing acts designed merely to put the other party in the hole, none of which could become a law and the discussion of which would only agitate and injure our business and industrial interests. If sudden exigencies should arise during the next year the Republicans can be relied upon to meet them in a broad spirit and to subject partisanship to patriotism, as they did when they brought about the repeal of the silver purchasing clause of the silver act. But unless these unforeseen exigencies arise, and there seems no reason to look for them, the duty of the Republican party in the next congress will be substantially to pass appropriation bills, prevent mischievous legislation and agitating debates, and then go to the people and ask them for the complete power which alone will enable us to pass any positive measures.—Senator Henry Cabot Lodge.

Canada's Democracy.

Canada's debt has increased eighty-three per cent since 1873, while that of the United States has decreased fifty-four per cent in the same time. It is high time for the Dominion to organize a Republican party to take charge of her treasury and retire the fellows who have been playing Democracy with it.—Cincinnati Times-Star.

Back to State Banks.

The ultimate objective of the Democratic currency tinkers is to drive the country back to the old system of state banks, under which the value of a note depended very largely upon its distance from the concern that issued it. Back of all the tinkering arguing and theorizing of the currency quacks lies a determined and ill-concealed purpose to destroy the present national banking system and replace it with

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What it Was.
The Empress Catharine had a warty heart for the ladies of her court. Walszewski relates in the new volume of his history that Catharine, noticing that the beautiful Mile. Potocka, who had lately come to the court, had no pearls, immediately commanded a fancy dress ball, to which the girl was bidden to come as a milkmaid. Then, while Mile. Potocka was dancing, the empress slipped a superb necklace of pearls into the pail she carried, and at her exclamation of wonder said, "It is only the milk which has curdled."

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